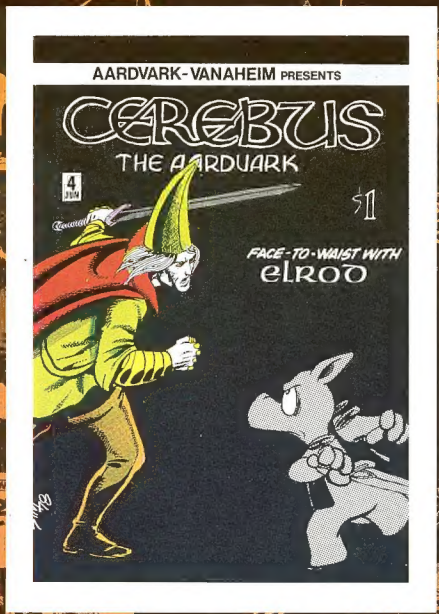


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CEREBUS

bi-weekly



reprinting Cerebus number four (1978) in its entirety

January 13, 1989

CEREBUS

bi-weekly

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CIRCULATION
22,000

DAVE SIM
President

KAREN McKIEL
Administrator

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The inside front cover of Cerebus 1 to 70 featured a 'Note from the Publisher' written by Deni Loubert. Dave Sim and Deni Loubert were married from October 6, 1978 to August 20, 1983. Deni Loubert currently resides in Long Beach, California and is the owner and publisher of Renegade Press, 2705 East 7th St., Long Beach, CA., 90804.

CEREBUS

A NOTE FROM THE PUBLISHER

Many things have happened between the last issue and this one. For me, the largest of these was the fact that we moved.

Now, moving a household is one thing. But when that also includes a studio and a publishing office, you begin to wish you hadn't gotten involved with all this. So after three days of moving everything imaginable (and way too many books!) everything is finally where it should be. Except for one thing. My editorial. MY EDITORIAL!!! Oh-my-god-I forgot-about-it!!!

I guess I should be thankful I didn't lose the issue itself.

This issue was somewhat slow to begin with, but really started zooming once Dave settled into it. I feel that he is improving continuously in his drawing, and the improvement shows in this issue. Elrod has got to be such a perfect match for CEREBUS in his inability.....but I don't want to give the story away. Maybe you should just get yourself comfy, and settle into a new adventure with our furry little friend.

Denise Loubert

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January 13, 1989

'SWORDS'
Introduction
Cerebus No. 4

The introduction below was written for **Swords of Cerebus**, six volumes of which were published reprinting Cerebus 1 to 25. It was written in 1981.

CEREBUS NO. 4 (June, July, 1978)

I distinctly remember a day, in the midst of drawing issue #3 when I suddenly started laughing hysterically. When Deni asked me what the problem was, I sort of gasped, "Eric. Picture Eric saying 'Mind yo' mannuhs, son. I've got a tall pointy hat.'" She looked at me long and hard with that "My God this time you've finally flipped" look of hers. I knew I was on to something. For the next few days, however, when anyone came over to see us, Deni would insist that I tell them. I got a lot of blank looks. I laughed a lot myself, but no one else did.

To be honest, I don't even know where the connection came from. Wendy Plini's jaw hit the floor when I told her that I had never read an Eric story. "But it's perfect," she managed to insist, "the way he's always talking non-stop - it's just like Eric. You've got to read one of the stories so you know how good the parody is." That was last summer and I still haven't read an Eric story - except of course for the Roy Thomas/Barry Smith Conan issues he appeared in.

This issue also introduced Cerebus' little vest - in honour of his first trip to a big city. It was intended as a joke, see. If you go into a city you have to get dressed. I've completely forgotten why I put those little designs on his medallions, though.

It was the most popular issue I had done to that point. People raved to me about it for weeks. Everyone I talked to suddenly developed a Foghorn Leghorn voice and spewed my own writing at me. And do you know what my reaction was when I had finished that story?

They aren't going to like it, because nothing happens. I mean he runs across the Albino, who gets him in trouble and then he escapes. I had visions of my brief career flaming out over the horizon.

It's a condition that has persisted to this day. Either you people are easy to please or I'm a wee tad too hard on myself.

Elrod has since appeared in issues 7, 12, 21 and 22. The pattern remains the same. He always pops up, seemingly from nowhere, with no explanation of how he got out of the fix we left him in (Aha! You hadn't noticed had you) and an entirely new vision of the best direction for his life to take.

Characters who are based on other characters in Cerebus tend to be the easiest to write. Once you catch the rhythm of their speech, you're halfway home to the kind of interaction that sells comic books. Someday I'm going to do a story with Cerebus, Elrod and Lord Julius locked in a closet. It'll write itself.

This is also the last story reprinted in this first volume. They span eight months of my life that could best be described as "turbulent." I drew the first three issues in a room that faced onto a four-lane thoroughfare. The room itself would've made a particularly spacious walk-in closet. The fourth one was drawn fourteen floors up in a second bedroom where I'm now typing this - it used to be 'the studio,' now it's

'the office.' When people ask if I ever thought Cerebus would ever be this big, it is a far more difficult question to answer than it appears on the surface. Yes and no. Yes, I had a feeling that there was a need for a new kind of humour in comic books. A feeling that everyone was just a bit weary of the Will Elder style of comic book humour adorned with signs, visual puns and heavy-handed parody. There was nothing wrong with this kind of work, but comic fans had had nothing else for almost thirty years. Mad magazine and Little Annie Fanny are still limping along on the remnants of it. We couldn't fall.

On the other hand, there are the days that Deni and I spent verging on hysteria, sinking into depression and contemplating suicide. I can remember sitting at Toronto Conventions with stacks of issue number one watching people racing past without a sideways glance or (grrngsh) dropping their packages on top of those stacks of number one while they looked through some dealer's stock of Marvel Two-in-One.

It is a source of no small pleasure that those self-same... people... are now waving twenty and twenty-five singles at us in hopes that we "have a few stacked away that we wouldn't mind selling."

The point is; don't kid yourself. It is an easy matter to say "with issue 6 the circulation went up and then doubled again with issue 16." To live through the uncertainty and the disasters, the royal screw-ups and the shaftings, the bounced cheques and the broken promises... not to mention the occasional good thing (sometimes they were very occasional) is a day-to-day proposition.

When I interviewed Gil Kane for a fanzine in 1973, Walt Kelly had just died the day before. I asked him if there was something about the business that was especially hard on people. He told me, in no uncertain terms, how you can come into comics six feet tall and full of heroic stature and inside of a few years it wears you down to a nub. I'm quite sure I just smiled or chuckled vaguely. After all, things might get bad - but at least he was working in C.O.M.I.C.S, right? We all have problems, but at least when he went to bed at night he could lie there and smile in the dark, knowing in his heart of hearts that he was G'I'L K'A'N'E, right?

And now, when I go to conventions as a guest, and I'm doing sketches of Cerebus and signing autographs and rubbing elbows with F'R'A'N'K M'I'L'L'E'R and joking with J'O'H'N B'Y'R'N'E, somebody will ask me what it's like to do comic books for a living - like full-time, you know.

And I'll tell them about Gil Kane and being six feet tall and being worn down to a nub inside of a few years.

Not surprisingly, they usually just smile or chuckle vaguely.

cerebus the barbarian

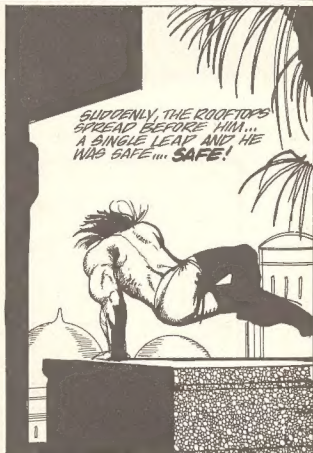
THE PRIZE IS HIS,
AND HE RUNS,
CLUTCHING IT TO
HIM...



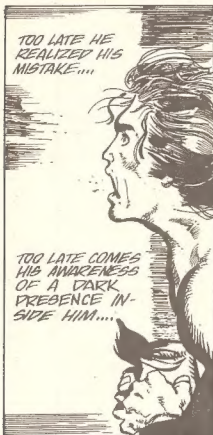
HE LOOKS OVER
HIS SHOULDER
CONSTANTLY....
JUST A LITTLE
BIT FURTHER...



SUDDENLY, THE ROOFTOPS
SPREAD BEFORE HIM...
A SINGLE LEAP AND HE
WAS SAFE... **SAFE!**



TOO LATE HE
REALIZED HIS
MISTAKE....



TOO LATE COMES
HIS AWARENESS
OF A DARK
PRESENCE IN-
SIDE HIM....

A SHARP STAB
IN HIS CHEST...



...THEN
BLACKNESS!

AND AS
HE FALLS,
AS THE
BALLS
BOUNCES
AWAY....
THERE IS



TIME
FOR
ONE
THOUGHT,



MAY TARIM
BE MER-
CIFUL WITH
WHOEVER
FINDS IT!



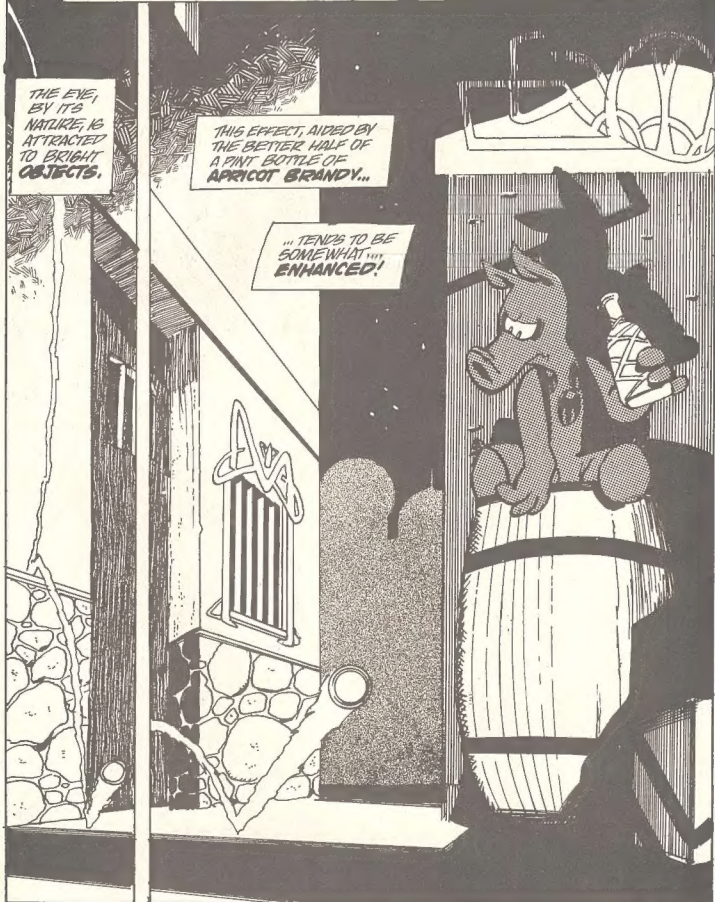
DEATH'S DARK TREAD

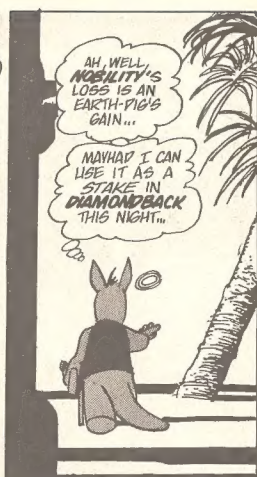
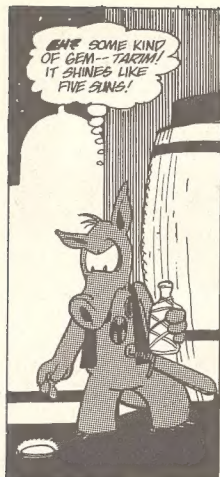
USING HENROT'S GOLD, CEREBUS BRIBES HIS WAY ONTO A MERCHANT VESSEL ON THE SOFIM RIVER. A WEEK LATER, HE IS WITHIN THE SEPRAN EMPIRE'S BOUNDARIES, POSING AS A TRADER IN TEXTILES! AT SERREA, THE INFORMAL CAPITAL OF THE LOOSELY-KNIT AND MILITANT EMPIRE, THE EARTH-FIG SEES HIS CHANCE FOR A MUCH-NEEDED VACATION: HE LOSES HIMSELF AMID THE BUSTLING CROWDS AND, WITH THE LAST OF HIS BUREALAN GOLD, SETS ABOUT THE SERIOUS BUSINESS OF DRINKING, EATING AND GAMBLING...

THE EYE,
BY ITS
NATURE, IS
ATTRACTED
TO BRIGHT
OBJECTS.

THIS EFFECT, AIDED BY
THE BETTER HALF OF
A PINT BOTTLE OF
APRICOT BRANDY...

...TENDS TO BE
SOMEWHAT...
ENHANCED!





AND AS CEREBUS' THOUGHTS TURN TO GAMBLING...

...AND AS HE CONSIDERS VARIOUS PLOYS AND WAGERS...



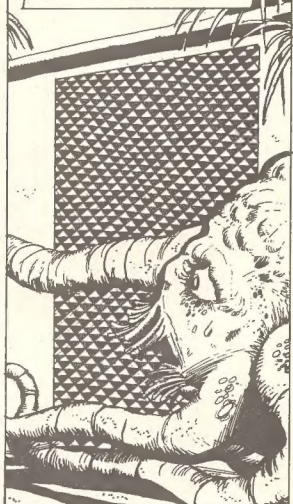
...HE FAILS TO SEE...



...THAT THE VERY ACT OF PICKING UP THE GEM...



...IS PROBABLY THE BIGGEST GAMBLE HE WILL TAKE THIS NIGHT...



THE EARTH-PIG TURNS A CORNER, COMING **ABRUPTLY** FACE-TO-FACE WITH A WITH ONE OF COUNTLESS **DEAD ENDS** IN THIS SOUTHERN METROPOLIS...



FROM NOW ON, CEREALIS WILL SLAKE HIS THIRST WITH ALES AND MEADS!



THESE CITY WINES MAY TASTE LIKE FRUIT JUICE, BUT THEY WREAK HAVOC WITH MY...#



CLOVIS' TEETH AND TANKARD!



THE SHORT BLADE GLITTERS PULLY IN THE HALF-LIGHT...

THOUGH THERE IS A MERCILESS THROBBING BEHIND THE EARTH-PIG'S WINE-BLURRED EYES...

...INGRAINED SKILLS INSTANTLY DICTATE HIS ACTIONS...



"SOON" MURMURS **DEATH**, "SOON THE GEM WILL BE **MINE!**"



"ONCE THE CRAWLER HERDS THIS PREY TOWARD ME, IT WILL BE CHILD'S PLAY TO GET THE GEM IN MY HANDS..."

CEREBUS SENSES YOU WISH HIM TO RUN, **DEVIL SPAWN!**

...BUT WHAT IF I CHOOSE TO FIGHT **INSTEAD?**

"A MOST 'VALIANT' WORM" CHUCKLES **DEATH**, "IF HE REFUSES TO RUN, THEN THE CRAWLER WILL REMOVE THE GEM AND LEAVE IT FOR ANOTHER TO FIND."

I AM NO CITY-BRED MORSEL-FOR-THE-TAKING!... YOU FACE AN EARTH FIG BORN, **DEMON!**

"**AMAZING!** BUT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO DEFEAT THE **CRAWLER!** NO MATTER HOW..."

WOUNDED, EH, **MONSTER?** YOUR MAW GAPES TO DEVOUR ME...

MAYHAP, **INSTEAD...**

"BY THE FIVE SPHERES," **DEATH** HIGGES ONE BROW ARCHING SLIGHTLY...

"YOU SHALL FEED ON **THIS!**..."

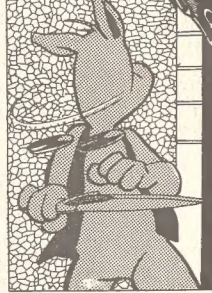
"A CREATURE FROM THE
DAWN OF TIME, A
CREATURE OF SORCERY
... BREATHING ITS
LAST..."

"DEFEATED BY MERE
FLESH AND BLOOD AND
IRON..."

"...AND STILL, I DO NOT
POSSESS THE GEM..."

AND TO THINK
THAT **CEREBUS**
CAME SOUTH
TO SEEK
SANITY...!

THE BEAST
IS ENORMOUS--
BUT FROM
WHERE DID
IT....

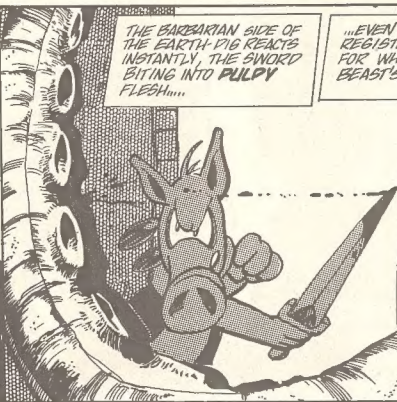


"MY FOE SEEMS
MORE CEREBRAL
THAN THE
AVERAGE
BARBARIAN,"
MUSES DEATH.

THE BARBARIAN SIDE OF
THE EARTH-DIG REACTS
INSTANTLY, THE SWORD
BITING INTO **PULPY**
FLESH....

"...EVEN AS HIS BRAIN
REGISTERS THE MOTION
FOR WHAT IT IS -- THE
BEAST'S DEATH THROES
..."

KNOWLEDGEABLE
IN SORCERERS'
WAYS, HE IS
MOVED TO
WONDERMENT
AT THE POWER
OF THE BEAST'S
MASTER...



"THE BARBARIAN IS
TOO HEADSTRONG
-- TOO INTELLIGENT
TO CONTROL! THE
GEM MUST BE BROUGHT
WILLINGLY TO ME --
I NEED A MORE
MALLEABLE PERSONALITY
TO BRING THE GEM
TO ME...."

THE EARTH-
PIG HEAVES
A SIGH AND
TURNS BACK
ONTO THE
MAIN
AVENUE...

HE REMOVES THE
GLOWING GEM FROM
AN INNER POCKET...

... AND STUDIES IT
BRIEFLY BEFORE...

...HOOKING IT
ONTO HIS
NECK CHAIN...

HE CONSIDERS,
AGAIN, HIS
CHANCES AT
DIAMONDBACK...

"SOMEONE NEAR-
BY--A PERSONALITY
CAPABLE OF
WRESTING THE
GEM FROM THE
BARBARIAN..."

"A PERSONALITY
WITH NO SUBTLETY
-- AN EASY
VICTIM OF...."

A SATISFIED
CHUCKLE ISSUES
FROM DEEP IN
DEATH'S THROAT...

CEREBUS REFLECTS THAT THERE ARE DRAWBACKS TO POSING AS A MERCHANT--ONE HAS TO ASSOCIATE WITH HIS KIND UNDER THE CITY GUARD'S WATCHFUL GAZE!

THE MERCHANTS AND TRADERS IN SERREA ARE CONSERVATIVE GAMBLERS AND FAVOUR SIPPING WINE TO GULPING ALE...



NEARLY DAWN! NO MERCHANT WILL BE THINKING OF ALE OR DIAMONDBACK 'TIL SUNSET...

TARIM!

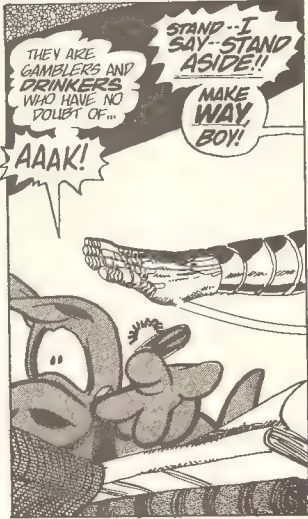
MAYHAP I SHOULD RISK CONSORTING WITH SOME OF THE DEHSION MERCENARIES...

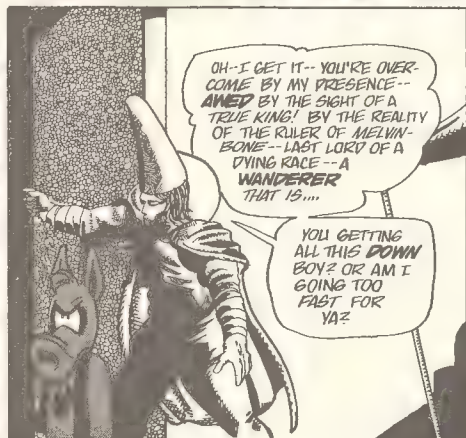
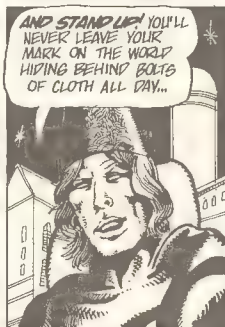
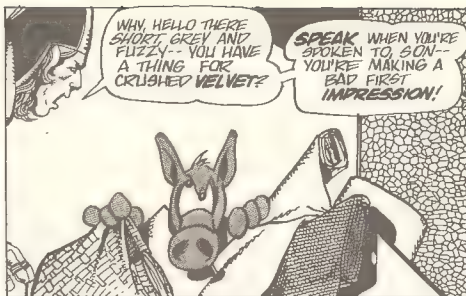
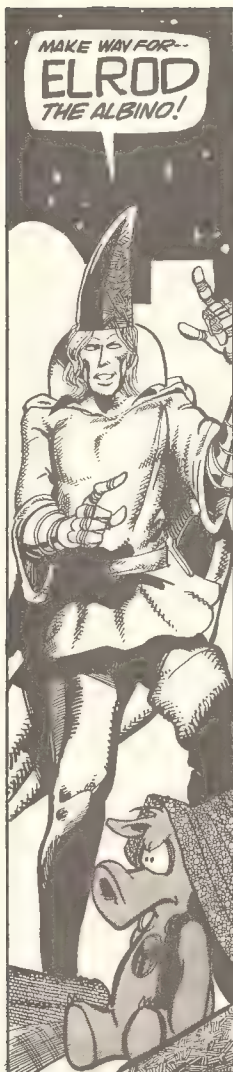
THEY ARE GAMBLERS AND DRINKERS WHO HAVE NO DOUBT OF...

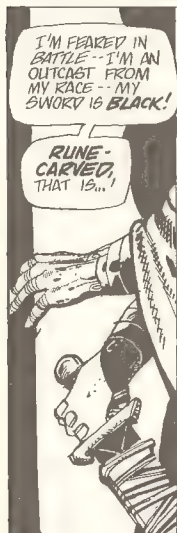
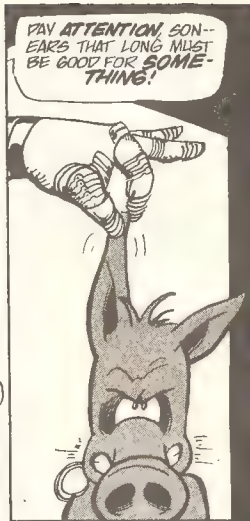
STAND--I SAY--STAND ASIDE!!

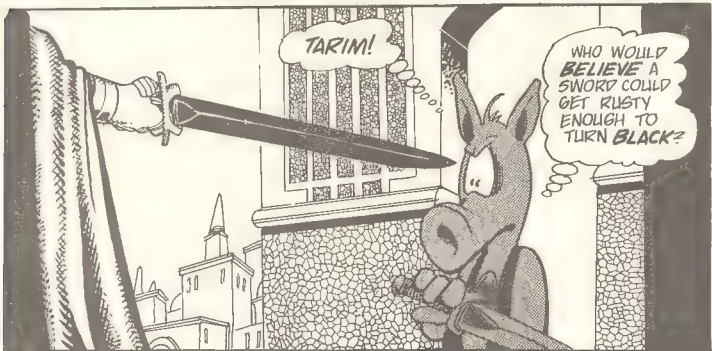
MAKE WAY, BOY!

AAAK!







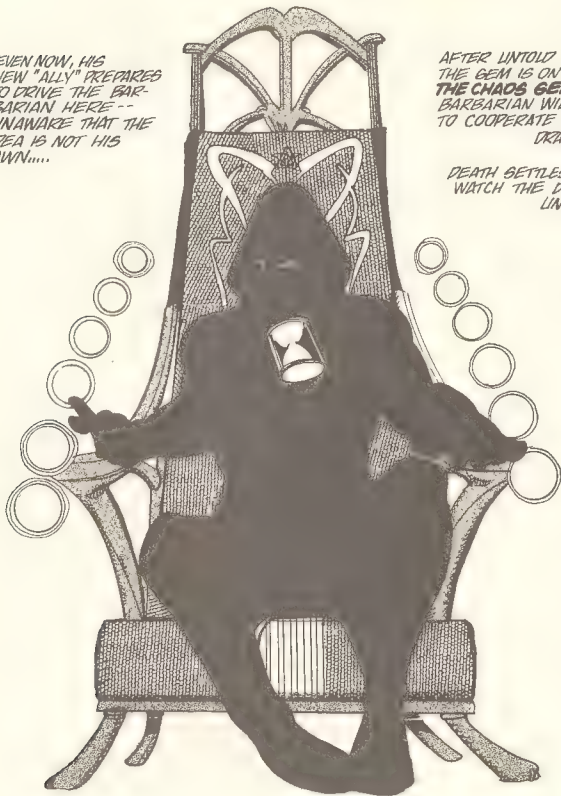


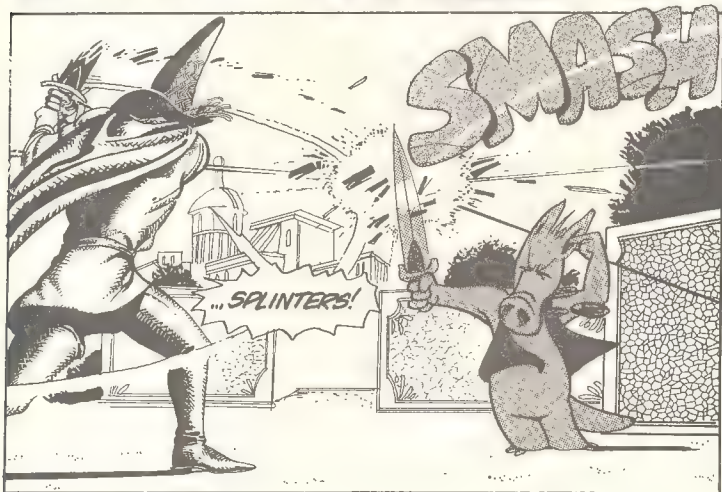
DEATH ABSENTLY CARESSES ONE OF THE HOVERING GEMS. "AN EVEN DOZEN," HE MUSES, "A SOURCE OF GREAT POWER, YES! **BUT**, CONSIDER THE THIRTEENTH GEM-- NOW SO CLOSE AT HAND." WITH THAT GEM WOULD COME A NEW GOLDEN AGE FOR **DEATH** DISEASES, FAMINE--WHOLE POPULATION'S WIPE OUT IN MERE DAYS! THE THOUGHT, AS ALWAYS, REINFORCES HIS GRIM DETERMINATION!

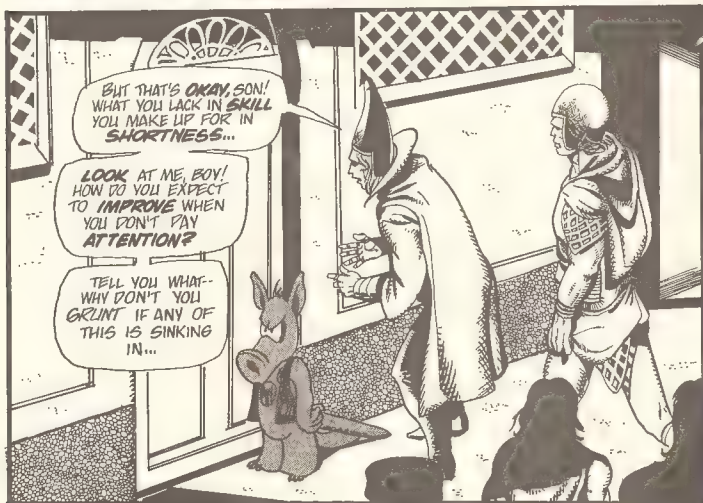
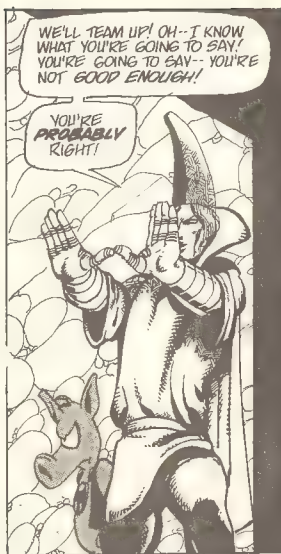
EVEN NOW, HIS NEW "ALLY" PREPARES TO DRIVE THE BAR-BARIAN HERE-- UN-AWARE THAT THE IDEA IS NOT HIS OWN.....

AFTER UNTOLD CENTURIES, THE GEM IS ON ITS WAY. **THE CHAOS GEM**, THE BARBARIAN WILL BE MADE TO COOPERATE ONCE HE DRAWS NEAR!

DEATH SETTLES BACK TO WATCH THE DRAMA UNFOLD!









NO LOITERING ON
THE AVENUES,
MERCHANT...

MOVE ALONG
AND TEND
YOUR **WARES**
OR...

AVE!



TENDING
HIS **WARES**
IS THE
BEST
IDEA
CEREBUS
HAS HEARD
YET THIS
TUN...



**HANG ON A CHICKEN-
PLUCKING MINUTE!**
WHO ARE YOU CALLING
MERCHANT, **DUNG FACE?**

WE'RE **WARRIORS!** THE
MIGHTIEST SWORDS IN
THE **SOUTHLANDS...**

GUARDS!
ALIEN
WARRIORS
HERE!

**CLOVIS'
BEADS!**



YOU CAN'T LET
THESE TIN-
PLATED **TURKEYS**
PUSH YOU
AROUND,
SON...

LINH!



OWO! REINFORCEMENTS!
BUT THESE **HALF-WITS**
DON'T FRIGHEN
ELROD THE
ALBINO...

WE'LL LET THEM
KNOW THEY CAN'T
MESS AROUND
WITH US...

ER--I'LL HANDLE
THE ONE ON THE
LEFT AND LEAVE
THE REST FOR
YOU...

WHAT?!



WATCH THIS, SON!
WITH BUT A SINGLE
BLOW, **ELROD**
DEFEATS THE
≈LIMPH≈



WITH ONLY TWO
≈LIMPH≈ OR ≈LIMPH≈
THREE PUNCHES
ELROD DEF...



WITH BARELY
≈LIMPH≈ ≈LIMPH≈
A HALF
DOZEN
PUNCHES,
ELR...



OH HELL!
WHERE'S
A BIG
ROCK
I CAN
HIT HIM
WITH?



HEY
CEREBUS!
-- YOU
GOT ANY
BIG ROCKS
OVER...



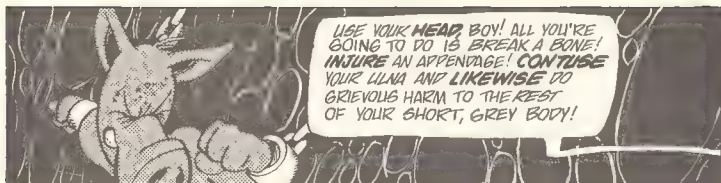
...THERE?



NOT MUCH
OF A
SCRAPPER,
ARE YOU,
BOY?

WE'LL LET
THEM ROT
IN THE
SOUTHGATE
PRISON...





USE YOUR **HEAD**, BOY! ALL YOU'RE GOING TO DO IS **BREAK A BONE!** **INJURE AN APPENDAGE!** **CONTUSE YOUR ULNA** AND **LIKEWISE** DO GRIEVOUS HARM TO THE REST OF YOUR SHORT, GREY BODY!



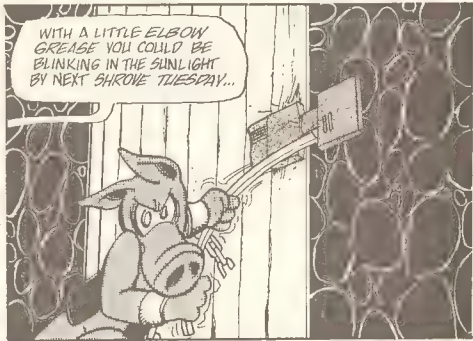
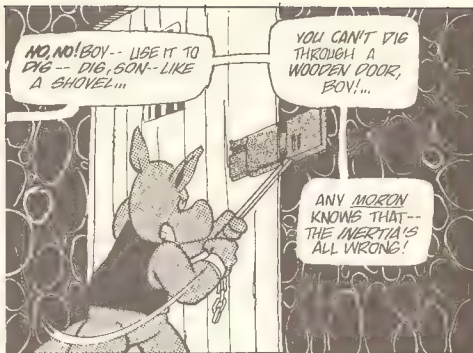
THAT'S JUST **TERRIFIC** SON-- NOW, YOU CAN PICK YOUR NOSE IF YOU WANT TO...

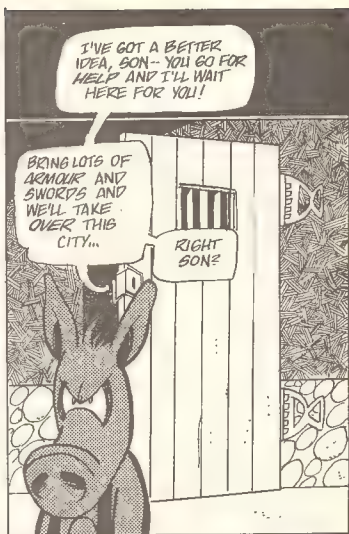
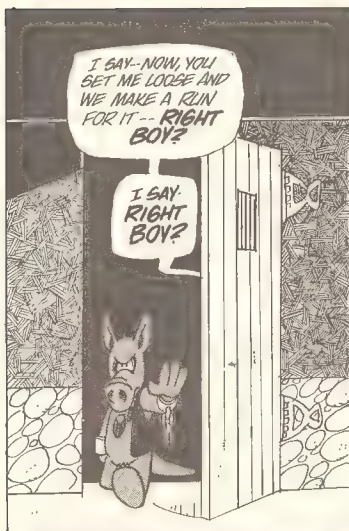


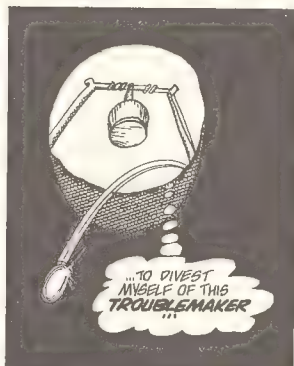
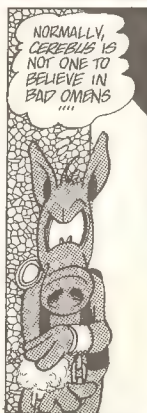
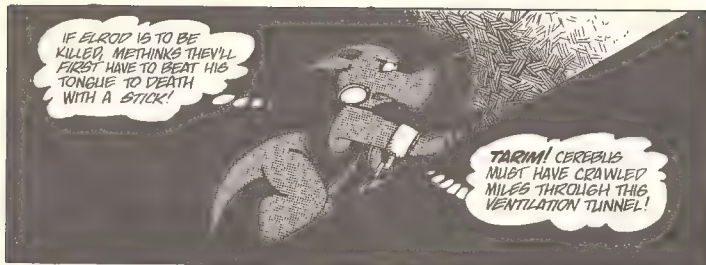
OH, COME ON NOW, BOY! JUST BECAUSE YOU FOUND A WEAK LINK IN ONE CHAIN, DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN **POSSIBLY...**



*CEREBUS DID HAVE SOME DIALOGUE ON THIS PAGE... IT'S JUST THAT NONE OF IT WAS PRINTABLE — DAVE

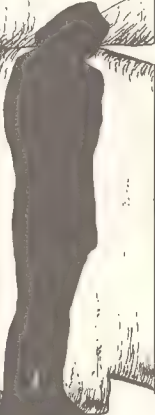








"SOME
DAYS..."



"SOME DAYS..."
DEATH THOUGHT
TO HIMSELF..



"IT JUST
DOESN'T
PAY TO
GET OUT
OF BED."

THE ARDURKIAN AGE



January 13, 1989

Cerebus No. 4

This is the original letters page to Cerebus No. 4

AARDVARK COMMENT

KITCHENER-ONTARIO N2G 1W5

Gentlemen,

I have been a fan of Aardvarks, sword and sorcery tales, and Canadian comics (the latter since I read *Canoe Goose* in 1972) for years. On a world-wide search for Aardvarks (the four in Chicago's Field Museum, the *Sesame Street* film on Aardvarks, etc.)

I like the art and the story. How about more of a sense of humour in Cerebus—a very broad, rough one of course. He had his joke at the end of #1, but something along the lines of Falstaff and the Grey Mouse would be fantastic.

You could give him a recurring foe—an Armadillo named Brutacus? or perhaps Bandillon?
Anyway, you happen to have hit my weak spot and I will continue to look for and purchase Cerebus.

Howard Heller
121 Todd's Rd. #117,
Lexington, KY,
40509

The question of Cerebus' sense of humour will be dealt with in time. At the moment, the decision is made on an issue-to-issue basis on whether Cerebus will be the perpetrator or the butt of the jokes in any given story. For the moment, however, he will be the only animal (funny or otherwise) in CEREBUS.

Re: CEREBUS, ignoble EARTH-PIG, defiler of tradition, gray Homunculus.
From: RED SONJA, Woman Warrior, exile from Hyrkania.
TAWDRY ELF-PIG!

It has come to my attention that the adventures of my sister, RED SOPHIA, have been sported about in an unseemly, if Artful manner. Few had known of the existence of SOPHIA. The legend has it that I had but two BROTHERS. I indeed had brothers, and a father and mother. Only SOPHIA and I survived the carnage in the fields beyond the sea of Vilayet.

The news that HENROT was still alive surprised me. The old buzzard. It does seem natural that the old enchanter would be attracted to the likes of the scurrilous Pig, for whatever reason. Assassination is a fitting contract considering the vile act upon SOPHIA's character.

So, she's calling HENROT her "Father" now, EH? That's as good a name as any. I had HEARD that the two were living together. SOPHIA always was strongly attracted to WIZARDS.

As for her liaison with the truncated barbarian, I'm not surprised. CEREBUS was never as deft with the Blade as I. Little wonder that the Pig bested her...but to suffer the indignity of a swat on the rump! How like SOPHIA to ply him with affection and GRANOLA.
GURANIAN TONSIL KISSING was a specialty of hers, tho I had not heard that she'd mastered MONOGRAMMING or the Art of TAIL MASSAGE. CEREBUS does have a beguiling tail, but I'd be more apt to ram it up his BUM, than treat it with affection.

FERAS was known to me. 'Twas said that nature had endowed him too little, causing life-long anguish. It would appear that CEREBUS was endowed not at ALL. Perhaps the TAIL, then has a secondary function. Short of that, it may be best that he remain one of a kind.

I do hasten to add that the tale was well told and rendered with considerable skill. The technique reminded me of the spells cast by a Sorcerer I once knew. You must have heard of him—EVADMIS THE LINGER. HE drew his power from undercooked PORK!

Red Sonja

To which we can only add—"Tarfin!"

Dear Dave:

By now you will have received the letter from the ram-bunctious REDHEAD. Sorry for what she said about CEREBUS, but you know SONJA. That's evident in the drawings of SONG OF RED SONJA, or, SOPHIA.

It's great, Dave. There are some really nifty aspects. The GRANOLA page, SOPHIA'S dance (Bum BaDa DA DA) NEAT!

I could go on and on, and I SHOULD. But it might become unseemly. Thanks Dave, from this old creature of the drawing caves. In time things like this will happen to you, for you are surely on your way.

Frank Thorne,
Scotch Plains, New Jersey.

The Staff of CEREBUS is shocked—truly shocked—to discover that Red Sonja's letter originated from the same address as that of Mr. Thorne. We think an artist his age ought to be ashamed of himself.

Dear Dave:

A few blunt remarks concerning CEREBUS. The notion of a barbarian aardvark warrior is, at best, ludicrous & at worst, sacrilegious. Here we have a genre which is desperately trying to raise itself out of the mire of crude, insipid pulp fiction in order to acquire a new degree of respectability, & what do you do? Do you emulate Moorcock? No. Wagner? No. Saunders? No. Instead, you let a bloody aardvark run amok, defiling our newly found sophistication & introducing into S&S all sorts of abhorrent & destructive rubbish: humour, satire, & Crom forlorn, fun! Fun, Dave, fun!

I've never been to Kitchener, Dave, but if there are any holes or crawlspaces to be found in that town you & that long-souted abortion had better scurry into one, taking your drawing board with you, because when Kane, Eric & I make learn of the emergence of this funny animal usurper, they're going to be looking for cruel revenge. How long, Dave will your fragile pen & brushes be able to ward off the savage, relentless onslaught of cold steel? By Crom, Dave, you've set Hyborian aesthetics back about 12,000 years (or so). In short I loved it.

You've clearly got a winning character & I wish you & Deni every success with the comic.

John Bell,
PO Box 3174 South,
Halifax, N.S. B3J 3H5

John Bell (Koskin Books) is one of the largest dealers in sword and sorcery and related items in Canada. Anyone interested in his latest catalogue can write to him at the above address. Cerebus is not intimidated by John's threats. So far the Earth-pig is battling a thousand against two wizards, Red Sophia, a shadow beast, a skeleton, Thugg the Unseemly and others. So there.

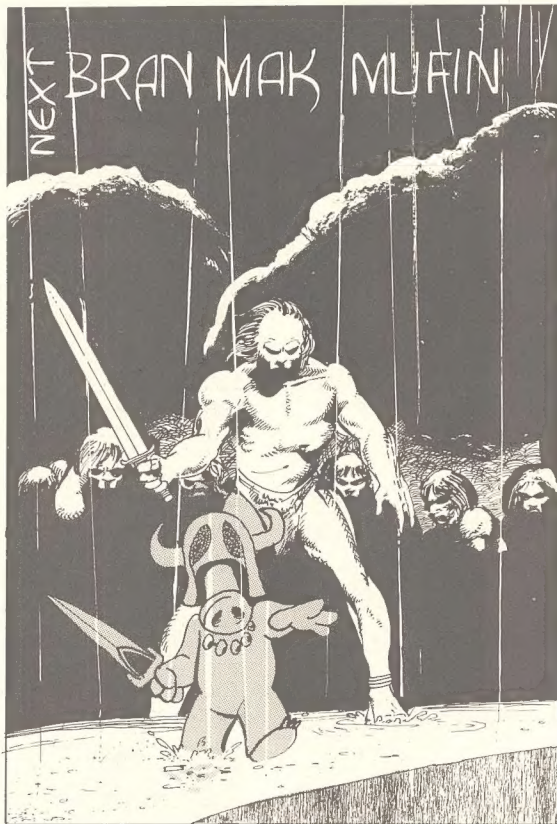
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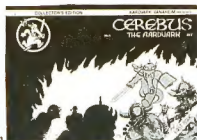
January 13, 1989

INSIDE BACK COVER
of
Cerebus No. 4
(1978)

This preview page appeared as the Inside Back Cover of Cerebus No. 4



the original back cover to CEREBUS number four



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